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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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APPLICANTS: Farmer
ASSIGNEE: Ganeden Biotech, Inc.
SERIAL NUMBER: 09/369,016 EXAMINER: I. Marx
FILING DATE: August 5, 1999 ART UNIT: 1651
FOR: METHODS FOR INCREASING THE SOLUBILITY OF ESSENTIAL VITAMINS &
MINERALS IN MAMMALS USING PROBIOTIC LACTIC ACID-PRODUCING
BACTERIA, SYSTEMS, AND COMPOSITIONS

October 7, 2002
Boston, Massachusetts

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Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE

In response to the Office Action mailed on April 9, 2002, please amend the application as follows.

In the claims:

Please add new claims 69-71 and replace the pending claims with the following amended claims:

D¹ 51. (Twice amended) A method of increasing bioavailability of nutrients in a mammal comprising buccally administering to said mammal a composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium, a fructo-oligosaccharide, a mineral gluconate and a supplementary enzyme, wherein said enzyme is selected from the group consisting of a lactase, an amylase, a glucanase, and a catalase.

D² 52. (Amended) The method of claim 51, wherein said *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium is a lyophilized vegetative cell.

53. The method of claim 51, wherein said bacteria is *Bacillus coagulans* Hammer.